GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1739
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2007
HARMFUL EFFECTS OF GM SEEDS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Multinational companies engaged in production of Genetically Modified (GM) seeds are not disclosing the harmful effects of their seeds on long term use in traditional farming;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether the farming community has also been demanding ban on use of GM crops;

(d) if so, whether the Government proposes to ban production and sale of GM seeds by such multinational companies; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to provide safe/indigenous seeds to farmers at a reasonable price?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a)&(b): Bt. Cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop approved for commercial cultivation by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) in the Ministry of Environment and Forests, on the basis of environmental and bio-safety evaluations. Harmful effects of Bt. Cotton seeds on human and animal health, plant life and environment have not been reported.

(c)&(d): There is no proposal with the Government to ban production and sale of GM seeds duly approved by the GEAC on the basis of their suitability in the various agro-climatic zone with regards to their performance.

(e): Bt. Cotton seeds are being produced and marketed in the country by private seed companies. The Government has organized Public Awareness Programmes to educate the farmers about the risks and benefits associated with the GM crops.